

NRO REVIEW COMPLETED

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2 October 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : Trip Report

1. I visited Vandenberg Air Force Base on 16 September 1963 to review problems at the L-Building.
2. The new Butler building is under construction and the completion date is about 1 November 1963. (A drawing of the new combined building is attached.)
3. At present, the working conditions and cleanliness are very poor. The original L-Building was designed for ARGON and CORONA. The addition of MURAL, J, and LANYARD have made the situation ridiculous. Some of the problems are as follows:
  - A. The ARGON clean-room has become a storage bay.
  - B. The size of MURAL, J, and LANYARD compared to CORONA - Triple Prime and ARGON complicate the problems of physical handling, check-out and storage.
  - C. The R-7 concept adds a storage problem.
  - D. Vehicle painting is accomplished on the receiving dock, then the payload is returned (thru the work area) to the clean room.
  - E. The clean room is not clean. There is no other place to check-out equipment and payloads received from Palo Alto, so the clean room is used for this purpose. Two janitors clean the room the night before loading. These janitors are unsupervised!
  - F. Film is stored in the end of a bay used for office space on the other end. Air conditioning is not adequate for good film storage. (Should be 65°)
  - G. There are too few personnel assigned to L-Building staff for the workload. Understand clearances in work to bring the total force to 65 people.

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4. I feel that while the new building will help, it will already be too small by the time it is completed. It was built with [redacted] and the usual problems of Air Installations approvals, etc. I feel we need additional space [redacted] should be used to expedite action, if approved. The following additional space is recommended:

- A. Paint room (approx. 400 sq. ft.).
- B. Weight and Balance Room (approx 400 sq. ft.). Approval has recently been given to purchase a new static and dynamic balancing machine which will accomplish both functions and be compatible with all payloads. Time reduction will be 50%.
- C. Storage room (approx. 600 sq. ft.).
- D. Receiving dock and inspection room (approx. 600 sq. ft.).

5. I also feel that in addition to the weight and balance machine, the following equipment is needed:

- A. A paint booth.
- B. A minimum of two trailers for pad systems run and launch support. The one current truck-trailer is too small for J and LANYARD, and workers have to squeeze by during check-out operations. This is a potential reliability problem. The new trailers should be about 10' x 40' x 12' and should be air conditioned as with the present small trailer.

6. I also recommend that one room be allocated to a combination lunch room - conference room. Meals are now eaten in the work areas and there is no place for a working group to assemble except in the work area. I feel this would contribute quite a bit to morale as well. My impression of the situation leads to the conclusion that the payload engineers at the L-Building feel they are poor country cousins.

7. We should take action to expedite clearance of L-Building employees and use the time between now and 1 November for indoctrination at Palo Alto. The additional people should permit more liaison with Palo Alto and assignment of individuals as special project experts (M, J, L, A) rather than having most of them participate across the board with a dilution of experience level.

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8. I have discussed this with [redacted] and expect a proposal. Here I would also like to point out that the L-Building people do not report to [redacted] but rather to LMSC management at VAFB. This may be part of the problem and bears investigation. 25X1

9. I feel that communications is also a problem. As a minimum, I think there should be at least a secure telephone line between Palo Alto and the L-Building. I feel that in double talking frequent misunderstandings occur and last minute changes could lead directly to reliability problems. Ideally, a secure means of transmitting engineering drawings and such detail would be highly desirable.

10. When I look at the clean room facilities at Palo Alto, S.K., and Westover, I am really unhappy with the conditions at the critical stage of loading and check-out. If we determine we are going to stay in the satellite business for a long time in the future, it would certainly pay to consider a permanent clean building some place closer to the launch pads.

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(October 1963)

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